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Agenda item 25

REPORT ON POPULATION ACTIVITIES (1988-1989), EXAMINATION OF APPROVED PROGRAMME OF WORK (1990-1991) AND CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME (1992-1993)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. During the period under review, the secretariat implemented the 1988-1989 work programme and submitted to the legislative organs a proposed programme for 1990-1991 which was approved by the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. It is worth recalling that the 1989-1990 draft work programme had been submitted to the last session of this Conference, in march 1987.

2. Regarding the process of the preparation of the medium-term plan, the financial crisis of the United Nations has had some influence on it. The Secretary General had first requested the secretariat to prepare a plan for 1990-1995 based on the identification of critical issues "which will confront the community of nations in the 1990s" and on "how the United Nations might best respond" to these issues. The draft plan was submitted in 1987 and was followed by two revisions. Then, the United Nations Controller invited all departments and offices to revise, for the third time, the 1984-1989 medium-term plan which was to serve as the framework for the formulation of the 1990-1991 proposed programme budget for consideration by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session in 1989.

3. At its forty-third session the General Assembly decided that the next medium-term plan shall cover the period 1992-1997. ECA secretariat had therefore no other alternative than to submit the draft of the medium-term plan 1992-1997 at the April 1989 session of the Conference of Ministers. The latter body set up an open-ended committee which met from 9 to 11 October 1989 to consider the proposed medium-term plan before its submission to the forty fifth session of the General Assembly, in 1990 .

4. This report outlines the implementation of activities of the secretariat in the field of population during the 1988-1989 biennium. It presents the approved work programme for 1990-1991 and the 1992-1993 draft work programme for review, in the framework of overall orientation given to it by the legislative organs, with reference, in particular, to the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action (KPA) and other instruments.

5. The 1988-1989 period has been characterized for the Africa region by the accentuation of the economic and debt crisis, of unpreceded proportion, by the continuation of implementation of structural adjustment and recovery programmes and by the adoption by Africa of the African Alternative Framework for Structural Adjustment Programme (AAF-SAP). This event constituted a breakthrough in the line of thinking regarding African economies and should constitute a milestone in the recovery process. In spite of pressing actions required by the adjustement and recovery packages, more and more countries have adopted population policies and started implementing population programmes with varying degrees of intensity .

6. These developments imply some shifts in both the perception of population problems among African governments and the services these may expect from institutions providing assistance.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1988-1989 WORK PROGRAMME

7. Some change has also occured in the activities of the secretariat, due mainly to lack of resources, besides the need to adapt to new situations of the countries. For instance national seminars on population and development, which were quite popular and successful among countries, were dropped. The secretariat focussed more of its attention on advisory services, training, including at the middle level, research and information, within the limited resources made available.

8. During the 1989-1989 biennium, the population programme continued to comprise three subprogrammes : (a) population policies and development planning, (b) demographic analysis in the context of economic and social development and (c) regional training and research. The three broad objectives of the programme were to continue to address the problems expressed by African countries, as reflected in the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action on Population, as well as the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (1986-1990) (UNPAAERD). The activities accomplished by the secretariat during the biennium are discribed below by subprogramme, followed by a section summarising other activities.

(a) Population policies and development planning

9. The four programme elements under this sub-programme were : (i) technical cooperation with countries and territories; (ii) assessment of population policies in socio-economic development planning in Africa; (iii) evaluation of the demographic impact of population programmes in African countries and (iv) integration of population variables and policies in development plans.

10. With regard to advisory services to member States in the formulation and implementation of relevant population policies and integration of population variables in development planning, the secretariat provided assistance to the following countries : Nigeria and Tanzania.

11. In the case of the United Republic of Tanzania, the objective of mission was to assist the Government in drawing up the inter-ministerial linkages for implementing the formulated national population policy. The assistance of ECA in completing the process of policy development was instrumental in the formal launching of the policy document. Thereafter, the task of implementation of the policy strategies had to be addressed.

12. The advisory service mission to the Federal Republic of Nigeria was to assist the Government in developing an Action Plan for implementing the strategies/measures of the population policy launched in April 1988. It was also envisaged to be associated with the country's process of population policy development through providing an opportunity for the Division to share with appropriate government authorities, the possible areas where it could assist in fostering the policy implementation.

13. Besides these services, the UNFPA-funded project on regional advisory services continued during the period, to be geared towards four main areas namely :(i) Needs assessment, project formulation, project evaluation and review; (ii) Analysis of demographic and related data and the integration of population into development planning and policy formulation;(iii) Training and human resource development; (iv) Dissemination of population information through workshops, seminars, etc.

14. As regards needs assessment, project formulation, review and evaluation, the advisory services undertook four such missions in 1988 and five in 1989. These were Benin, Togo, Sao Tome and Principe and Swaziland in 1988 and Niger, Gabon, Djibouti, Cote d'Ivoire and Seychelles in 1989. Thus, the participation of ECA demographic analysts in project preparation and implementation is being pursued but would be more efficient if the analyst is associated in the project from the planning stage.

15. On the Analysis of demographic data and the integration of population into development planning , seven missions were undertaken in 1988 to Congo, Benin, Cameroon, Togo, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Ghana. The Cote d'Ivoire was also assisted in the enumeration of its population. In 1989 five missions have been undertaken to Cameroon, Congo, Niger, Liberia and Swaziland. A mission was also undertaken to Malawi to participate in a seminar on population and development and to assist the University in the development of a Population Training Programme.

16. Regarding training, two subregional workshops on data evaluation and analysis were held in Ghana in 1988 and in Cote d'Ivoire in 1989, respectively for the English and French-speaking countries. National workshops on census data analysis were held in Burkina Faso, Liberia in 1988 and in Swaziland in October 1988. A lecture mission was undertaken to the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) in 1989 and assistance was given to the Governing Councils of both RIPS and IFORD in 1988.

17 The advisers were also involved in various conferences and meetings to disseminate demographic information, besides the POPIN-Africa activities, like the national dissemination seminar in Burkina Faso and the monitoring of the implementation of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action on Population.

18. An important feature of recent years has been the intimate involvement of local personnel in data analysis and preparation of the census reports of the member States with the ECA advisers guiding and assisting local experts. Unfortunately, inordinate delays in data processing and production were experienced in some countries.

19. The secretariat prepared two papers respectively on status and prospects of population policies in ECA member States for policy makers in the population field and the impact of maternal and child health and family planning programmes on fertility, infant and childhood mortality and maternal health.

20. The paper on policies used data from the U.N. monitoring reports published to date and to the 6th UN population inquiry to review the status and prospects of population policies in the ECA member States. After providing a background to population policy development in the region, the study overviews what is known about policies on population growth, fertility, spatial distribution and migration. Admittedly, more is known to date on the formulation of these policies than on their implementation. On this basis, the study then uses the Guidelines for integrating population variables in development planning (UNECA, 1988) as a framework for suggesting a modus operandi for improving population policy formulation and implementation in the region during the 1990s.

21. The study on the impact of MCH/FP programmes on fertility, infant and childhood mortality and maternal health confirmed, once more, the impact of MCH/FP programmes on reducing fertility, infant and childhood mortality as well as maternal mortality. However, this impact differs from country to country, depending on the strength of programmes. Obviously, it appears that these should be expanded to reach larger segments of the population and respond to the needs for spacing or limiting births and for combatting sterility. The study also stresses the fact that a better assessment of the impact of the programmes requires devising a mechanism for data collection, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes.

22. On integration of population variables and policies in development plans, five papers were already submitted to the last session of this Conference (see list of papers in the 1988-1989 work programme, programme element 1.6). Drawing from the pertinent remarks of this session, the secretariat also prepared a review paper on relevant legislative instruments affecting the formulation and implementation of population policies.

23. The review examined and analysed legislative instruments in the areas of explicit population policies, legal reforms and country statements relevant for guiding planners in the region with the identification and direction of policies. It revealed that legislation is a wealth source of information to document the development of policies, but more work remains to be done to investigate this source on a more systematic and comprehensive basis.

(b) Demographic analysis in the context of economic and social development

24. Under this subprogramme, advisory services to member States by regular staff had to be dropped, as a request for extra posts was not successful.

25. In addition to the report on fertility levels, patterns, differentials and trends in selected African countries, which was presented to the last session of the Conference, two studies have been completed, related one to proximate determinants of fertility and the second to the effect of nuptiality variables on fertility in selected African countries and one report was also published on the social, cultural and legislative factors affecting family formation and fertility in selected African countries(ECA/POP/TP/88/2(2.2).

26. From the first study it appears that proxi-determinants play a greater role in fertility change than social and economic variables referred to usually. Furthermore, it was noticed that the fertility-reducing impact was greater with the post-partum variables (breastfeeding-amenorrhoea, post-partum abstinence). Thus the average relative fertility-reducing impacts of these variables has been estimated to 55 p. 100 in Africa compared to 10 and 41 p. 100 respectively in the Americas and Asia. This does not compare with the roles of nuptiality and contraception use which account only for 34 and 7 per cent respectively, in fertility reduction in Africa.

27. The study on the effect of nuptiality variables on fertility highlighted the predominance of nuptiality variables in the determination of fertility levels in Africa. Thus, the pattern of nuptiality (early and universal marriage), and the high rates of remarriage combined with a little contraceptive practice in Africa lead not only to an early exposure to risk of conception but kept this risk high throughout the reproductive life. The study shows also that fertility does not change significantly from monogamous to polygamous unions to warrant a sharp conclusion on the effect of type of unions on fertility. It also addresses adolescent fertility and estimates to 16 per cent the reduction in fertility due to the combination of delayed marriage and its disruptions.

28. The study on social, cultural and legislative factors affecting family formation and fertility in selected African countries noted that social and cultural values in most countries favor early marriage and frequent childbearing so that completed families are considerably large. But other factors also encourage high fertility, like infant and child mortality, low level of education among women, religious beliefs, legislation, which limits the access to information and use of modern contraception. Hence, the decrease in fertility requires policies such as improvement of education and employment opportunities for women, pro-

vision of information, education and communication on family planning, encouragement of later marriages, recognition of human rights and promotion of legislation on reproduction, use of contracption and improvement of health and family planning services.

29. Mortality, for its part, remained important in the agenda of the Population Division. Two publications were completed, one on a comparative geographic analysis of mortality levels, patterns, differentials and trends in middle Africa and the other on a comparative study on infant and childhood mortality and its relationship to fertility and cultural factors and socio-economic development in selected African countries.

30. The first study is a continuation in a series of studies aimed at analysing mortality levels and differentials and preparing life tables of selected countries, with the focus on Central Africa, in this case, including Cameroon, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Central African Republic. The selection was made on the availability of comparable data used in the study. The results suggest clearly that mortality remains very high in the sub-region, with significant differences among countries ranging from highest in Congo to lowest in Cameroon. However, infant and child mortality was highest in Central African Republic and much lower in Congo. Public health programmes appeared to be very effective when implemented among young children in some countries. Differences in mortality are the reflexion of differences in the level of socio-economic development, of formulation and implementation of public health policies and programmes and, to some extent , the result of the different patterns of diseases in these countries.

31. The results of the second study confirm the cardinal role played by maternal education, birth spacing intervals and maternal age in the decline of both fertility and mortality. These are the major determinants of fertility and mortality interrelationships besides age and experience with child loss by women. Illiterate and older women with close birth intervals between children, are associated with high fertility and child mortality. Hence, the provision of some education to women would influence the reduction of both, if coupled with some spacing of at least two years and limitation of child bearing upto 35 years.

32. On projections, some work was done to evaluate and adjust data, to produce projections and to check them respectively with the United Nations Headquarters and with the member States. Past experience, which was characterised by many gaps between estimates and projections done by member States and those produced by the United Nations, has led to devote more efforts to reconcile the differences as reflected in the new sets of projections showing some improvement in the quality of data produced by the countries.

33. Population distribution and urbanization did not receive such attention in the past and no resources were made available to study these topics. However, the Population Division succeeded in hiring a consultant who prepared a technical publication on the patterns, causes and consequences of urbanization in Africa.

34. In a situation of a low but fast growing urbanization, the development of primate cities has negative consequences on overall national development. Therefore, countries require comprehensive and sound urban policies coordinated with regional and rural development ones. But these seem to be difficult to conceptualise and implement, particularly in the context of the economic crisis which has hit Africa in the eighties.

35. During the period under review the Demographic Handbook for Africa was published. It presented in a consolidated form demographic data and analysis from various sources on the principal demographic indicators of ECA member States.

(c) Regional training and research

36. This subprogramme covered the support given to the training and research institutes i.e. CERPOD, IFORD and RIPS. Detailed reports on activities and problems related to these institutes are presented under a separate agenda item of the Conference.

37. During the period under review, both RIPS and IFORD welcomed UNFPA missions, to look into the future of these institutions. In spite of the interest shown by member States for these useful training and research centres, the financial support has been lacking, except from few countries, including the host countries, which had to support the bulk of local expenses. The outcome of the UNFPA missions will be dealt with in detail in agenda item covering the activities of the Centres.

(d) Other activities

38. The secretariat performed other activities in connection with UNFPA approved projects and/or in the framework of its normal undertakings. In this category fall, in particular, the POPIN-AFRICA project, and other activities, like the self- evaluation exercise, the participation in the sessions of ECA Conference of Ministers and other meetings.

(e) Population Information Network for Africa (POPIN-Africa)

39. During the 1988-1989 period, the Population Information Network for Africa (POPIN-Africa) was engaged in three main types of activities ,i.e : network publication and documentation and clearing-house activities.

40. Network activities included the interaction of mass media agencies in the process of dissemination population information. To this end, a round-table meeting with mass media groups including PANA, APDA and selected/national news agencies was organized in Dakar in 1988 by POPIN-Africa. POPIN-Africa also participated in the UNESCO/UNFPA Population Awareness Creation Seminar for African Journalists held in Yaounde in May 1989. The seminar provided a useful forum for discussing programmes and the possibilities of engaging the expertise of journalists and mass media groups in population information diffusion.

41. Following the recommendations of the Second Advisory Committee Meeting in November 1987, a POPIN-Africa Technical Working Group (PAT) was established in 1988 to advise on the technical functions of POPIN-Africa. The first PAT Working Group Annual Meeting was held in November 1988, to consider a set of papers on computerization and processing of documents and related issues. The second PAT meeting was held in December 1989. A similar working group on dissemination and diffusion of population information (PAWID) was established in October 1989.

42. An important component of the activities of POPIN is the creation of national population information centres. In 1988 and 1989, a particular effort was devoted to it, with the full support and cooperation of the UNFPA Country Directors. Rwanda, Nigeria, Tanzania and Senegal have been visited and considered for opening centres.

43. During the perion under review, POPIN AFRICA continued its series of publications, like POPINDEX-AFRICA, vol.4 and 5, POPIN-Africa Country Profiles, No. 3 and 4 on Ghana and Rwanda, respectively, the African Population Newsletter No.54, 55 ,56 and 57 and a revised version of the African Population Profile, among others.

44. POPIN-Africa plays also its role of a documentation and clearing house in collecting and dissemination documents and information, through exchange arrangements, free distribution or sale. Its referral file was updated by 500 records.A set of technical manuals was published as indicated in the background paper on POPIN-Africa.

(f) Other activities

(i) report on self-evaluation

45. The United Nations for some time now have devised a system of periodic evaluation and self evaluation. Regarding the latter, each unit was invited to undertake a self evaluation of one subprogramme. The ECA Population Division completed the exercise on subprogramme 2 of its programme, i.e Demographic analysis in the context of economic and social development for the period 1984-1986, in order to assess whether it was responding adequately to the needs of member States in performing its activities.

46. The findings of the self-evaluation were reported to the fifteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers, in 1989. They showed that generally the activities of the programme were useful in improving the knowledge of the population issues in the region and in assisting member States in their population activities. However some improvements were still needed in some areas, like a better specification of the objectives of the medium term plans, and their linkages with the biennial programme budgets, the need to devise indicators to measure the impact of the programmes and to monitor the dissemination of research studies.

(ii) Conference of Ministers :

47. The fifteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers, in 1989,considered a paper on "Demographic patterns and trends: Implications for the implementation of UNPAAERD and APPER", (E/ECA/CM.15/19), on the relationship between population trends and socio-economic development and the imbalance in their growth rates. The paper called on the need to integrate population variables in socio-economic development and to formulate and implement population policies that complement socio-economic development. The paper was well received at the Conference of Ministers and contributed to stimulate discussions among the policy makers on population issues.

(iii) Participation to other meeting

48. The secretariat participated at the following meetings:

(a) Colloquium on the impact of family planning programmes in sub-Saharan Africa: current issues and future prospects, organized by RIPS (Accra, 10-14 april 1989).

(b) Seminar on the role of family planning programmes as a fertility determinants, organized by IUSSP(Tunis, 26 - 30 June 1989).

(c) National seminar on safe motherhood, organized by the Ministry of Health of the Government or Ethiopia, (Addis Ababa, 18 - 20 September 1989).

(d) Twentieth session of the Population Commission of ECOSOC (New York, February 1989).

(e) UNFPA Inter-Agency Consultative meetings.

(f) UNFPA International Population Forum (Amsterdam, November 1989)

(g) National seminar on population and development (Lagos, April, 1989)

(h) Expert group meeting on methodologies for measuring contraceptive use dynamics (New-York, December, 1988).

(i) International conference on use of dissemination and use of census data (Cairo, October, 1988).

(j) Symposium on population and development (Cairo Demographic Centre, October, 1988).

III. APPROVED PROGRAMME OF WORK 1990-1991

(A/44/6 (sect. 13) Pages 98 sq)

The 1990-1991 work programme will continue to address population issues, in line with the needs of member States, as expressed in the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African Population and Self-Reliant Development and Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 as well as the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. Specifically, the areas covered by the programme of work include problems of population distribution and redistribution, population policies and planning and regional population training. In addition, research on population dynamics, the integration of population factors into national development planning and policies and population information dissemination activities will also continue to form an important component of the work programme. The three subprogrammes, their programme elements and the related output over the biennium are described below.

Subprogramme 1. Population policies and development planning

(a) Resource requirements : regular budget: $419,400 (33.0 per cent of programme total in 1990-1991; 29.0 per cent of programme total in 1988-1989.

(b) Reference: medium-term plan 1984-1989 (A/37/6 and Corr.1), paras. 18.57-18.60.

(c) Programme elements :

1.1 Integration of population variables and policies into development planning in Africa

Output:

(i) Reports to the sixth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers on (a) an evaluation of national experience in ECA member States in the implementation of population policies in relation to the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action; and (b) population activities in 1988-1989, examination of the approved programme of work for 1990-1991 and consideration of the draft work programme for 1992- 1993 (first quarter, 1990);

(ii) Technical publication: Manual for the integration of population variables into development plans in African countries at the macro-level and in the agricultural sector (fourth quarter, 1991).

Operational activities: technical advisory missions pertaining to the formulation and implementation of relevant population and integration of population variables into national development planning.

1.2 Evaluation of the demographic impact of population in African countries.(highest priority)

Output:

(i) Report to the sixth session of the Joint Conference on the relative roles of maternal and child health care and family planning programmes, proximate determinants, and socio-economic correlates in influencing fertility (first quarter, 1990);

(ii) Technical publications: (a) statistical compendium on contraceptive prevalence and practice in African countries (fourth quarter, 1990); and (b) guidelines on improving the delivery and evaluation of population and family planning programmes in African countries (fourth quarter, 1991).

Subprogramme 2. Demographic analysis in the context of economic and soccial development

(a) Resource requirements: regular budget: $635,400 (50.0 per cent of programme total in 1990-1991; 56.0 per cent of programme total in 1988-1989).

(b) Reference: medium-term plan 1984-1989 (A/37/6 and Corr.1), paras. 18.61-18.66.

(c) Programme elements:

2.1 Fertility levels, patterns, differentials and trends in African countries.

Output: Technical publications: (a) life-table analysis of birth intervals with illustrative applications in selected African countries, for government demographers (third quarter, 1990); (b) fertility estimates in selected African countries: source of data, methods of estimates, fertility levels, patterns and trends, for government demographers and planners (fourth quarter, 1991); and (c) methods of measurement and analysis of childlessness and infertility from survey data in selected African countries (fourth quarter, 1991).

2.2 Mortality levels, patterns, differentials and trends in African countries (lowest priority).

Output: Technical publications: (a) mortality patterns, trends, differentials and life tables (fourth quarter, 1990); and (b) guidelines on evaluating the interrelationships among infant and child mortality, socio-economic factors and fertility (fourth quarter, 1991).

2.3 Population projections, and evaluation, adjustment and analysis of demographic data for the African region.

Output:

(i) Report to the sixth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers on an evaluation of the age-sex data of recent African population censuses (first quarter, 1990);

(ii) Technical publication: guidelines on the methods of evaluating the socio-economic and demographic consequences of refugees in African countries (fourth quarter, 1991).

(iii) Ad hoc technical information service : computer print-outs on population projections on ECA member states, in response to requests from governmental organisations (fourth quarter 1991).

Operational activities:

(i) Substantive servicing of a training workshop on the methodologies of subnational and sectoral population projections, for African planners and demographers (third quarter, 1991);

(ii) Technical advisory missions, upon request, on evaluation and analysis of data from population and housing censuses, surveys, and vital statistics, and provision of on-the- job training for nationals in demographic analysis.

Subprogramme 3. Regional training and research

(a) Resource requirements: regular budget: $216,000 (17.0 per cent of programme total in 1990-1991; 15.0 per cent of programme total in 1988-1989).

(b) Reference: medium-term plan 1984-1989 (A/37/6 and Corr.1), paras. 18.67-18.71.

(c) Programme element:

3.1 Regional demographic training, research, population information and co-ordination of population programmes

Output

(i) Report to the sixth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers on ECA regional training and research institutes (first quarter, 1990);

(ii) African Population Newsletter (two issues in 1990, two in 1991).

Operational activities: Assistance to member States in the development of national population information centres and networks, advisory missions for project development, technical support, UNFPA country project execution, monitoring and evaluation.

IV. WORK PROGRAMME 1992 - 1993 - TENTATIVE OUTLINE

P.E. 1

(i) Report to the seventh session of the Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers on :

(a) implementation of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action (first quarter 1992).

(b) population activities in 1990-1992, examination of the approved programme of work for 1992-1993 and consideration of the draft work programme for 1994-1995 (first quarter, 1992);

(c) emerging issues on population dynamics and their policy implications for ECA member States (1st Quarter 1992);

(d) assessment of urban in-migration policies in selected ECA member States (first quarter 1992).

(e) ECA regional training institutes (first quarter 1992).

(ii) Technical publication: an assessment of the formulation and implementation of population policies in selected ECA Member states (fourth quarter 1993)

Operational activities: technical advisory missions to member States in policy formulation and implementation, analysis of demographic and socio-economic data, training nationals in demographic analysis and population related activities and population institution building.

P.E. 2

(a) determinants of successful family planning programmes in selected African countries (fourth quarter 1992);

(b) study on levels of contraceptive use and continuity in family planning programmes in selected African countries (fourth quarter 1993).

P.E. 3

Technical Publications: assessment of fertility trends and their policy implications in selected African countries (fourth quarter 1992);

P.E. 4

Technical Publication: study on environmental factors and their effects on fertility in selected African countries (fourth quarter 1993)

P.E. 5

Technical Publication: Mortality levels, patterns, trends and differentials and construction of life, tables for selected African countries (fourth quarter 1992);

P.E 6

Technical publication: the effects of socio-economic determinants and environmental factors on infant and child mortality and fertility and their effects on development programmes in Africa (fourth quarter 1993).

P.E. 7

Technical Publication: sub-national and sectoral population and projections in national development plans and programmes in selected ECA member States (fourth quarter 1992);

P.E. 8

Technical publication: patterns, trends and determinants of international migration in ECA member States in the 1980s (fourth quarter 1993).